

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

UPDATED 2014

Purpose of checklist:

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants: [\[help\]](#)

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. You may use "not applicable" or "does not apply" only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown. You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

Instructions for Lead Agencies:

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B plus the [SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS \(part D\)](#). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in Part B - Environmental Elements –that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

A. background

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: Scotch Creek Wildlife Area - Chesaw Wildlife Unit, Habitat Improvement Prescribed Fires
2. Name of applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person: Bryan Dupont, Scotch Creek Wildlife Area, 1514 Conconully Hwy Okanogan WA, 98840. Phone# 509-826-4430, Bryan.Dupont@dfw.wa.gov

4. Date checklist prepared: 8/21/2014
5. Agency requesting checklist: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable): Fall 2014-Fall 2018, each unit being burned once as conditions and funding allows over the 4 year period.
7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain. None at this time.
8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.
 1. EZ 1 cultural resource form.
 2. WDFW burn plan
 3. Archaeological protection plan.
9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain. None know.
10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.
 - Cultural Resources EZ 1 form
 - WDFW Burn plan
 - WDNR Sivilcultural Burn Permit
 - WDNR Daily approval for smoke emissions if over 100 tons
 - Archaeological protection plan
11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

The Wasington State Department of Fish and Wildlife proposes to use prescribed fire as a tool to improve wildlife habitat and ecological processes, restore fire effects and fire by-products, reduce fuel loads and improve forest health within the boundaries of the Scotch Creek Wildlife Area - Chesaw Wildlife Unit located in Okanogan County, North Central Washington. A prescribed fire burn plan that meets or exceeds will be completed and approved prior to implementation and it will adhere to the WADNR Sivilcultural Outdoor Burning Regulations and permitting processes. All work will be overseen by a Burn Boss meeting the standards of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group who is qualified at the level of complexity determined for the burns as outlined in the burn plans. The work site consists of 7 burn units ranging from 52 – 262 acres in size, and the entire project encompasses 824 acres. Units

will be burned one at a time and some units may require several days to complete. The work will consist of creating fire control lines that will remove organic burnable material to a minimal level needed to contain the fires, we may use firehoses (hoselays) surrounding critical holding areas, and units will be ignited with handheld drip torches or other firing devices. Post-burn hotspots will be mopped-up with engines, hoselays and handtools to ensure containment of the fires as determined by the Burn Boss. The prescribed burns and work related to implementation the will be preformed by WDFW staff, partner organizations and WDFW contract crews.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

T 40N, R 30 E, Sec 6, 7, 8, 17, 18; Okanogan County, WA; 1.7 miles northeast of Chesaw, WA

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

a. General description of the site

(circle one): Flat, rolling hilly, steep slopes, mountainous,
other _____

Burn units are generally flat with moderate rolling slopes. Steep outcroppings can be found within the units, but are short in length. Slopes average 13% throughout the project burn units with a range of 0%-35%.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

35%

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

Koepke silt loam, Hum silt loam, Colville silt loam, Synarep silt loam, Cashmere silt loam, Nevine silt loam, Lithic xerochrepts-hum complex, Molson silt loam

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. None

e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

None

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe. Root mass associated with existing vegetation should be minimally affected by prescribed burns. As such, burned areas will have little or no erosion potential beyond what would naturally occur in precipitation events. Most control lines used to contain the prescribed fires will be mowed leaving root masses intact. Some control lines will need to be constructed with equipment and hand tools to bare mineral soil at a minimum width and depth using Minimal Impact Suppression Techniques. Where control lines have potential to develop overland flows erode soils, water control structures (water-bars) will be installed to reduce the threat.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)? None

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any: None

2. Air

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

There should be no significant impact to air quality. The prescribed burning will adhere to the State of Washington Department of Natural Resources Sivilcultural Outdoor Burning Rules. A Daily Smoke Management Approval for Large Burn Sivilcultural Prescribed Fires will be obtained prior to each day of ignitions if there are 100 or more tons of particles to be emitted.

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe. None are known

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:
The prescribed burning will be implemented as per State of Washington Department of Natural Resources Sivilcultural Outdoor Burning Rules and Daily Smoke Management Approval.

3. Water

a. Surface Water:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe

type

and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

-During high water events Strawberry Lake flows to Gafvery Creek, a tributary to the Kettle River Watershed

-Two unnamed ponds with no known outlet.

- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Yes, firelines construction to control the prescribed burns will require vegetation removal using mowers pulled by a farm tractor or hand operated weed-eaters, dozer and hand tools. Dozer and tractor operators will operate their equipment Minimal Impact Suppression Techniques to remove organic fuels and create barriers to the spread of fire. The dozer blade or plow will be angled and tilted in a manner to remove fuels at a minimum width while scraping. The goal is to retain ecological integrity where possible while creating an adequate suppression line.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

None

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Water may be pumped from Strawberry Lake or other unnamed ponds into fire hoses 1.5 inches and ¾ inches in diameter to deliver water around burn unit perimeters and aid holding operations. The amount of water withdrawn will be insignificant and no noticeable drop in water levels should be observed.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.
No

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

None

b. Ground Water:

- 1) Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Water pumped from Strawberry Lake or other unnamed ponds will be applied to temporarily wet fuels surrounding burn units to aid control of the prescribed fires and to cool fuels inside burn units near control lines after fire has passed. Some of this water will wet the soil surface, but will likely evaporate and not reach ground water. If it were to reach ground water it should have no negative impacts to water quality. Exact quantities of water are unknown, but it should be insignificant.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the

number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve. [

NONE KNOWN

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

None

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

No

- 3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.

No

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

In the event of fire escape and new containment lines are constructed water bars will be installed to divert and slow runoff if and where needed.

4. Plants

a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

☒ X deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

☒ X evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other

☒ X shrubs

☒ X grass

☐ pasture

☐ crop or grain

☐ Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.

☒ X wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other

☒ X water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other

☐ other types of vegetation

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Grass and downed wood through burning. Potentially a few live trees will be scorched and die as a result, which will create valuable dead tree wildlife habitat (snags).

c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

None

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

The primary objective of the project is to improve wildlife habitat, reduce fuel loads and improve forest heath. Burning will also stimulate fire dependent vegetation some of which may not currently be observed within the units, but may be in the seed bank.

- e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.
Musk Thistle, St Johnswort, Houndstounge

5. Animals

- a. List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site. Examples include:

birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other: owls, grouse
mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: Moose
fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other _____

- b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.
Sharptail grouse – listed as a Washington State Threatened Species since 1998

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

No

- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

- Maintain and enhance grassland shrub-steppe habitats
- Stimulate desirable foraging, hiding and nesting vegetation to support wildlife habitats
- Maintain natural range of variability in plant successional states, richness and diversity to enhance wildlife habitats
- Retain living and dead trees, and recruit snags that are needed to maintain wildlife habitats
- Release nutrients bound in existing vegetation to stimulate wildlife habitats
- Restore fire effects and byproducts, which has been interrupted due to fire suppression

- e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

None known

6. Energy and natural resources

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

N/A

- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties?
If so, generally describe.

No

- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal?
List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

None

7. Environmental health

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal?
If so, describe.

There is a mitigated risk that when using portable water pumps during implementation of prescribed fires fuel could be spilled, or leak.

There is a mitigated risk of an escaped prescribed fire.

- 1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

None know

- 2) Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.

None know

- 3) Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.

Smoke will be produced from the burning of vegetation.

- 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

If a prescribed fire were to breach defined unit boundaries and it cannot be contained by on-site resources, WDFW will request additional contingency resources identified in the prescribed burn unit plan and notify WA DNR who will make the determination as to whether or not the burn has become a wildfire.

If a fuel spill occurs as a result of using portable pumps immediate containment efforts will be made and the WA Department of Ecology will be notified.

- 5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Pumps and fuel cans will be kept within containment dams appropriate for their physical size and absorbent pads will be available.

Contract Crews, WA DNR, Fire District 11 and USFS may be asked to assist in implementation of prescribed fires. Fire equipment available on-site during implementation of prescribed fires will be identified in the approved prescribed fire burn plan(s). All participants in burn operations will be trained wildland firefighters using required personal protective clothing and equipment. At least one wildland fire engine will be onsite.

b. Noise

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

None

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

Noise will be generated by equipment used to construct the fire lines, and during burn day operations from fire pumps and other equipment. Noise will primarily be generated weekdays.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

None – Noise will be confined to the burn project areas and should not be heard off-site.

8. Land and shoreline use

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.

The site is used as a Wildlife Management Area. Adjacent properties are used for agriculture and timber management.

b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?

Yes, cattle grazing, hay and grain production prior to WDFW ownership. No land will be converted.

1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how:

No

c. Describe any structures on the site.

Two old outbuildings are located within the burn units. All buildings and structures will be protected.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

No, all building will be protected

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

Agriculture, Forest

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

Available on-line: http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

N/A

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

No

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

None

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

None

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

N/A

L. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

None

m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

None

9. Housing

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

None

10. Aesthetics

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

N/A

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

Smoke production from prescribed fires will be of short duration having temporary, localized and small impact on views. A daily smoke permit will be obtained from WA DNR prior to implementing prescribed fires with more than 100 tons emitted.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

Desirable post-burn vegetation response will occur as soon as there are favorable growing conditions. Aspen clones should be stimulated by prescribed fire (primary burn objective) resulting in aesthetically pleasing stands that provide diversity to important wildlife habitats. Post-burn native grass seed production should increase, and we should witness a stimulation of forb communities resulting in a flush of wildflowers. Some wildflowers may not have been seen at this site for many years and flowering as a fire disturbance will allow the soil seed bank to be replenished to ensure the continuance of some species.

11. Light and glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

None

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

No

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

None

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

None

12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?
Hunting, hiking, horseback riding, etc

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe. [

Yes, only adjacent lands will be affected for a short duration during burning and post-burn mop-up activities.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

We will try to avoid burning on weekends and during busy hunting seasons.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers located on or near the site? If so, specifically describe.

There are several structures or structures in ruins which have been recorded outside the eastern portion of the project; the associated archaeological survey report indicates that the site should be considered potentially eligible. WDFW's contract archaeologist has been asked to provide clarity about the relationship between the proposed project and these sites.

- b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.

The nearest (recorded) professional studies resulted in the identification of a several archaeological sites outside the project boundary. It is unclear what the relationship is between the boundaries of these sites and the proposed project. WDFW has contracted for a cultural review of the project to address these issues and determine if any other cultural resources might be present.

- c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.

Five tribes are known to have occupied the Okanogan Highlands; these include the Sinkaietk, Lake, Sanpoil-Nespelem, Okanogan, and Colville. The project area lies within the traditional territory of the Southern Okanogan or Sinkaietk. Following the termination of the Moses Reservation in their traditional homeland, many Sinkaietk remained on the Colville Reservation and are now politically affiliated with the Confederate Tribes and Bands of the Colville Reservation. WDFW has initiated formal consultation with the CCT.

Given the presence of recorded archaeological sites and the landforms and environment that are sensitive for cultural resources in the area, WDFW will be conducting a cultural review of the project. Background research will include a site files search at the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, review of previously recorded cultural resource reports, review of pertinent published literature and ethnographies, and field investigations.

The results of the survey will be provided to DAHP and the CCT for review prior to the initiation of construction.

d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required. The results of WDFW's cultural resources survey for the project will be used to inform final project design. Any necessary mitigation and/or avoidance measures will be designed in consultation with the affected Tribe(s) and DAHP. WDFW policy would be to exclude all known sites from the project. When project goes to construction, WDFW will operate under an Inadvertent Discovery Plan; if cultural resources are identified within or near the project, the Cultural Resources Management Plan would be implemented.

14. Transportation

a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

Only Wildlife Area access roads will be used to access the burn units in this rural area.

b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

No

c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?

None

d. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

No

e. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

No

f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

N/A

g. Will the proposal interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

No

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

None

15. Public services

a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

No

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

N/A

16. Utilities

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:

electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,
other _____

None

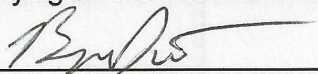
b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service,
and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might
be needed.

None

C. Signature

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the
lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: _____



Name of signee _Bryan Dupont_____

Position and Agency/Organization _Wildlife Area Assistant Mgr, DFW_____

Date Submitted: __8/21/2014_____